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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 11: Independent Living | Effective Date: July 1, 2006 |
| | Section 4: State Youth Advisory Board | Version: 1 |

POLICY [REVISED]

OLD POLICIES 404.45

- The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will fund one State Youth Advisory Board (YAB) for CHINS and Probation youth aged 16-21 in foster care and former foster youth aged 18 to 21 who were in foster care for a period of six months with a case plan identifying the need for independent living (IL) services. See [Youth Advisory Board Service Standard](#) for more information
- DCS will assure that one eligible youth is selected from each of the 18 regions to participate on the State YAB.

Code References

[42 USC 677: Chafee Foster Care Independence Program](#)

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM)/Probation Officer and/or Chafee IL contracted service provider will:

1. Assist eligible youth who demonstrate the desire and willingness to voice their opinion on foster care related matters and participate in public speaking opportunities in submitting a YAB application.
2. Complete the recommendation section on all YAB applications from eligible youth.

The Regional Services Council will:

1. Develop a selection process for applications received for YAB participation in each region.
2. Select one youth from the applications received to participate on the State YAB to represent the Region.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Youth Development

The YABs are designed to provide a forum for youth 16 to 21 to develop an agenda related to services and areas of interest that the youth believes would be beneficial in assisting foster and former foster youth in reaching his/her full potential as the youth move into adulthood. The youth will develop topics of interest, develop interpersonal skills, and seek adult guidance in bringing ideas to fruition. This program will prepare youth in transitioning from adolescence to adulthood by recognizing and accepting personal responsibility.

Meetings, Transportation, Stipends, and Childcare

Meetings will be held at least six times annually. Meetings will be held during overnight stays on the evening prior to conferences in which the youth will participate and all day Saturday meetings at other times. See [Youth Advisory Board Service Standard](#) for details.

Childcare will be available for any participating YAB member that requires assistance. Financial stipends of \$25 will be provided to each YAB member participating in meetings as well as hotel accommodations and meals for overnight stays. The State mileage rate of \$.40 per mile will be made available for transporting the youth to the meetings and hotel accommodations and meals will be provided for the youth's caregiver, Chafee service provider, or other adult chosen by the youth (i.e. spouse, boy/girl friend, relative, etc) for overnight stays with the youth. Financial stipends of \$25 will also be made available for the person transporting the youth to the YAB meetings.

Participation in the State IL Youth Conferences

The YABs will collaborate annually with the contracted agency developing the State IL Youth Conferences to review and discuss topics of interest and provide input into the conference session and activities. The YAB members will provide assistance to the contracted agency during the conferences in areas of interest and proficiency. Other conferences in which the YAB members will participate include Children-Out Best Interest and the State Foster Parent Conference.

FORMS AND TOOLS

- [Youth Advisory Board Application Form](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

It is expected that participation on the Youth Advisory Boards will:

- Balance youth need for support and empowerment
- Accommodate a broad range (type, intensity) of youth participation
- Demonstrate clear, concrete, sincere appreciation of youth contributions
- Provide preparation to assist youth in assuming roles traditionally reserved for adults for which they have no prior experience.
- Allow for consistent opportunities to give structured feedback regarding the quantity and quality of services and supports provided to them in care and after they have aged out.
- Facilitate development of personal responsibility.
- Initiative opportunities for youth leadership and service development.
- Develop coordination with the Workforce Investment Act Youth Councils.
- Provide an opportunity to learn from youth what is really important to them.
- Improve the quality of Independent Living services by obtaining direct input and feedback from youth members that are receiving services.
- Assist with the opportunity to develop or change public policy.